IN THE ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Please amend the Abstract as follows:

--There are provided in a rate control command a clock rate select subfunction (SYNC SELECT) to which a digital signal receiver side corresponds, a base rate subfunction (BASE CONFIGURE), a flow rate control (FLOW CONTROL) subfunction, and a capability inquiry subfunction (CAPABILITY INQUIRY). The CAPABILITY INQUIRY subfunction is used to send to a transmitter side a clock rate select state (SYNC SELECT), base rate set state (BASE CONFIGURE), and flow rate control state (FLOW CONTROL). Thereby, a digital signal can be transmitted between specific units positively and successfully.--

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IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1-20 by rewriting same to read as follows.

--1. (Amended) A digital signal processor connected via a predetermined transmission line to a unit whose data transmission rate can be at least externally controlled, the digital signal processor comprising:

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generating means for generating a command for making an inquiry to the unit connected via the predetermined transmission line as to a rate control of the unit;

transmitting means for transmitting the command via the predetermined transmission line; and

receiving means for receiving a response to the transmitted command.

--2. (Amended) The digital signal processor as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the rate control of the unit includes a synchronous control, a base data transmission rate control, and a variable rate control for fine adjustment of a base data transmission rate.

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--3. (Amended) The digital signal processor as set forth in Claim 1, further comprising

recognizing means for recognizing, based on the received response, the rate control of the unit.

--4. (Amended) The digital signal processor as set forth in Claim 3, further comprising

control means for controlling the transmission rate in

accordance with the rate control of the unit recognized based on the received response.

--5. (Amended) A digital signal processor connected via a predetermined transmission line to a unit whose data transmission rate can be at least externally controlled, the digital signal processor comprising:

receiving means for receiving command for inquiry of a rate control transmitted from the unit via the predetermined transmission line;

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examining means for examining, based on the command, the rate control of the digital signal processor; and

sending means for sending back a result of the examination.

--6. (Amended) The digital signal processor as set forth in Claim 5, wherein the rate control includes a synchronous control, a base data transmission rate control, and a variable rate control for fine adjustment of a base data transmission rate.

--7. (Amended) A digital signal processing system comprising:

a first digital signal processor connected via a predetermined transmission line to a unit whose data transmission rate can be at least externally controlled, the first digital signal processor including:

generating means for generating a command for making an inquiry to the unit connected via the predetermined transmission line as to a rate control of the unit;

transmitting means for transmitting the command via the predetermined transmission line; and

first receiving means for receiving a response to the transmitted command; and

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a second digital signal processor connected via the predetermined transmission line to the unit, the second digital signal processor including:

second receiving means for receiving a command for inquiry of a rate control transmitted from the unit via the predetermined transmission line;

examining means for examining, based on the command, the rate control of the second digital signal processor; and

sending means for sending back a result of the examination.

--8. (Amended) The digital signal processing system as set forth in Claim 7, wherein rate control includes a synchronous control, a base data transmission rate control, and a variable rate control for fine adjustment of a base data transmission rate.

--9. (Amended) The digital signal processing system as set forth in Claim 7, further comprising

recognizing means for recognizing, based on the received response, the rate control of the unit.

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--10. (Amended) The digital signal processing system as set forth in Claim 9, further comprising

control means for controlling the data transmission rate in accordance with the rate control of the unit recognized based on the received response.

--11. (Amended) A digital signal processing method for a unit connected via a predetermined transmission line to a digital signal processor, where a data transmission rate of the unit can be at least externally controlled, the method comprising steps of:

generating a command for making an inquiry to the unit connected via the predetermined transmission line as to the rate control of the unit;

transmitting the command via the predetermined transmission line; and

receiving a response to the transmitted command.

--12. (Amended) The digital signal processing method as set forth in Claim 11, wherein the rate control includes a synchronous control, a base data transmission rate control, and a variable rate control for fine adjustment of a base data transmission rate.

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--13. (Amended) The method as set forth in Claim 11, further comprising a step of recognizing, based on the received response, the rate control of the unit.

--14. (Amended) The digital signal processing method as set forth in Claim 13, further comprising a step of

controlling the data transmission rate in accordance with the rate control of the unit recognized based on the received response.

--15. (Amended) A digital signal processing method for a unit connected via a predetermined transmission line to a digital signal processor, where a data transmission rate of the unit can be at least externally controlled, the method comprising steps of:

receiving a command for inquiry of a rate control transmitted from the unit via the predetermined transmission line;

examining, based on the command, the rate control of the digital signal processor; and

sending back a result of the examination.

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--16. (Amended) The digital signal processing method as set forth in Claim 15, wherein the rate control includes a synchronous control, a base data transmission rate control, and a variable rate control for fine adjustment of a base data transmission rate.

--17. (Amended) A digital signal processing method for a unit connected via a predetermined transmission line to a digital signal processor, where a data transmission rate of the unit can be at least externally controlled, comprising:

a first digital signal processing procedure including steps of:

generating a command for making an inquiry to the unit connected via the predetermined transmission line as to the rate control of the unit;

transmitting the command via the predetermined transmission line; and

receiving a response to the transmitted command; and

a second digital processing procedure including steps of:

receiving a command for inquiry of a rate control transmitted from the unit via the predetermined transmission line;

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examining, based on the command, the rate control of a second digital signal processor; and

sending back a result of the examination.

--18. (Amended) The digital signal processing method as set forth in Claim 17, wherein rate control includes a synchronous control, a base data transmission rate control, and a variable rate control for fine adjustment of a base data transmission rate.